

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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R 271016Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5195
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY RANGOON

S E C R E T DACCA 3467

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PDEV, BG, BM
SUBJ: ZIA TO VISIT BURMA

1. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS JUNE 27, BOTH FOREIGN SECRETARY TABARAK HUSAIN AND CHIEF OF ARMY GENERAL STAFF BRIGADIER MANZUR TOLD ME THAT PRESIDENT ZIA WILL PAY AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO RANGOON DURING THE THIRD WEEK OF JULY. HE WILL BE ACCOMPANIED, AMONG OTHERS, BY THE FOREIGN SECRETARY AND QAZI JALALUDDIN AHMED, SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE, FORESTS, FISHERIES AND LIVESTOCK, WHO SERVED AS DEPUTY COMMISSIONER IN CHITTAGONG AND WORKED CLOSELY WITH BURMESE LOCAL OFFICIALS SEVERAL YEARS AGO DEMARCATING THE BORDER. NOW THAT PROGRESS IS BEING MADE IN IMPROVING THE SITUATION ALONG BANGLADESH'S BORDER WITH INDIA (SEPTTEL), THE BDG HOPES TO ENLIST RANGOON'S COOPERATION IN SIMILAR MOVES ALONG THE SOUTHEASTERN SECTOR.

2. MANZUR SAID BANGLADESH FACES A SERIOUS PROBLEM BECAUSE BURMA MAKES NO EFFORT TO STOP THE MOVEMENT OF ARAKANESE MUSLIMS, MANY OF WHOM HAVE RELATIVES ON THIS
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SIDE OF THE BORDER, INTO BANGLADESH. THIS CREATES BOTH AND ECONOMIC AND A SECURITY PROBLEM. MANZUR ADDED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME GOP INVOLVEMENT DURING PAKISTAN DAYS WITH DISSIDENTS OPERATING IN BURMA, BUT THIS HAS BEEN TOTALLY STOPPED BY THE BDG. MANZUR SAID THE BDG HAS ASSURED RANGOON THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS THAT IT IS GIVING ABSOLUTELY NO SUPPORT TO DISSIDENT ELE-

MENTS. RANGOON HAS NOT REPLIED. THE BDG HOPES THAT A PERSONAL VISIT BY PRESIDENT ZIA WILL ELICIT BOTH A FAVORABLE RESPONSE TO THESE OVERTURES AND SOME CONCRETE ACTION IN RETURN BY BURMA TO STOP THE MOVEMENT OF DISSIDENTS AND OTHERS FROM THEIR SIDE OF THE BORDER.

3. FOREIGN SECRETARY TABARAK HUSAIN SAID THAT ADDITIONAL SUBJECTS TO BE DISCUSSED WITH THE BURMESE WOULD BE POSSIBLE RESUMPTION OF WORK ON THE EAST-WEST HIGHWAY, TRAINING OF BURMESE IN BANGLADESH IN FIELDS SUCH AS ENGINEERING, AND CULTURAL AND OTHER EXCHANGES.

4. BOTH TABARAK HUSAIN AND MANZUR IMPLIED THAT THE IMPETUS FOR THIS VISIT CAME FROM THE CPM'S VICTORY IN THE RECENT WEST BANGAL ELECTIONS. THE BDG BELIEVES THE CPM ASPIRES TO CREATE AN INDEPENDENT COMMUNIST NATION IN THE AREA NOW COMPRISED OF BIHAR, WEST BENGAL, ASSAM, BANGLADESH AND NORTHERN BURMA. TO FRUSTRATE THIS MOVE, BANGLADESH HOPES TO IMPROVE ITS RELATIONS WITH BURMA AND ENLIST RANGOON'S SUPPORT IN EFFORTS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN THE AREA.

MASTERS

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